

The Apprentice

Part three: “Timothy the Honourable”

Reflection and study notes

“Timothy my son I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to the faith and a good conscience.”

1 Timothy 1:18

“Whoever wants to be judge of human nature should study people’s excuses.”

Hebbel

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities- his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

Romans 1:20

Introduction:

This is the final instalment in the series on The Apprentice.

Over the last couple of weeks we have been exploring what it means to be an apprentice according to the bible.

We have looked at Peter. He was an apprentice used by God in spite of his failures

We have looked at Joshua. He was an apprentice used by God in spite of his fears.

This week we look at Timothy.

The Apprenticeship of Timothy

Timothy was converted during Paul’s first missionary journey. He became a key player in Paul’s ministry team accompanying Paul on his second missionary journey.

Timothy was with Paul when he wrote three of the Prison Epistles – Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, and Paul left Timothy at Ephesus to deal with the false teachers.

Timothy actually had a number of legitimate excuses as he worked for Paul. These excuses are hinted at in the letters Paul wrote to him.

Timothy was young 1 Tim 4:12

He didn’t keep very good health 1 Tim 5:23

He was from mixed ancestry – His father was Greek. His mother was a Jew

He worked in a difficult situation 2 Tim 2:23

He was shy and timid 1 Tim 4:15, 2 Tim 1:6-8

Excuses, Excuses

Excuses are very common. We excuse ourselves from a lot of things. If we miss school we give an excuse. If we miss family time we often give an excuse. When we are stopped for speeding many of us try to give an excuse.

It is always tempting to draw on these excuses with God.

Jesus told a parable in Luke 14 of a great banquet held for the people of a town. The invitations were sent out but no one came, instead every one of them offered an excuse.

Reflect on some of the excuses you use with God?

In this study we are going to look at 3 excuses that were relevant to Timothy and that many of us still draw on today.

NOTES	The Apprentice Part three: "Timothy the Honourable"
<p>"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young." 1 Tim 4:12</p>	<p>Excuse Number One - My age is against me You may feel too young, you may feel too old. We can all feel out of our depths at times and we can often attribute this feeling to our age. Paul said to Timothy <i>Age is not a barrier</i> It doesn't matter how old we are God can use us. If you are feeling too young then read the call of Jeremiah If you are feeling too old then look how God used Sarah at 99 Is your age holding you back?</p>
<p>"All authority under heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations." Matthew 28:18</p>	<p>Excuse Number Two - I'm not in charge Or in other words it is not my responsibility Most of the excuses given in a working environment have to do with feeling like you don't have the proper authority. Jesus says however <i>You have the authority</i> We have been given the authority to change the things in our lives which aren't right. We have also been given the authority to challenge those things which we believe are wrong. Paul wrote to Timothy and said "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage, - with great patience and careful instruction." 2 Tim 4:2-3 What part of your life do you need to take authority over?</p>
<p>"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the worst." 1 Tim 1:15</p>	<p>Excuse Number Three - I'm not good enough Paul said to Timothy – don't even go there!!! God always uses people who are far from perfect. Think of David, think of Peter, think of Ezra – read Ezra 9:5-7 God says <i>You are good enough for me</i> "Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God." 2 Corinthians 3:5-6 How does this free you to serve God? In the end Timothy proved himself (Phil 2:22) as one worthy of the calling placed on his life. Timothy wasn't known for his excuses he was known as fulfilling the prophecy of his name – He honoured God.</p>
<p>"Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many." 1 Tim 6:12</p>	<p>Jesus wants us to become his disciples, his apprentices – in spite of any excuses we may come up with. Jesus says "Come to me... and learn from me" Jesus says "<i>I am the way, the truth and the life</i>" Jesus says "Follow me."</p>